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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/726,017	12/02/2003	Jeffrey L. Sands	60246-297	2647

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EXAMINER

PELHAM, JOSEPH MOORE

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3742

DATE MAILED: 11/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/726,017

Applicant(s)

SANDS ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph M. Pelham

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 and 12--20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 19 and 20 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3,7,15,17 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,4-6,8-10,12-14 and 16 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 May 2004 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

Claims 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 17, at line 4, recites "second structure" – it appears that "second heating structure" was intended.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 3, 7, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat. 3646880 (US'880) in view of US Pat. 3739712 (US'712).

US'880 discloses a grilling oven comprising first and second heating members (18-19, 80), first and second belts (46, 55), and an adjustable gap between them (see col. 4, lines 38-43 and col. 5, lines 34-48). The claims differ substantively from US'880 only in reciting a beveled portion of second heating member. However, US'712 discloses, at Figs. 3 & 5, and col. 4, lines 47-50, a beveled portion 82 of second heating member 31 in a conveyor grill. Although the second heating member of US'712 is not within a conveyor belt, the advantage cited by US'712, of a gradual compression of the grilled food item to avoid its breaking up, would appear to obtain in the case of a second heater within a belt; hence it would have been obvious to adapt the beveled feature of US'712 to the heater of US'880. While US'880 and US'712 do not explicitly disclose automatic dispensing of seasoning, this does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. It would have been obvious to utilize automatic, i.e., sensor based, seasoning dispensing means since such has long been conventional in the art to avoid the time and expense of manual dispensing.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 2, 4-6, 8-10, 12-14, and 16 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 17 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

Claims 19 and 20 are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph M. Pelham whose telephone number is 571-272-4786. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robin Evans can be reached on 571-272-4777. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

10/31/05



JOCELYN PELHAM
PATENT EXAMINER